

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 USC 102 (b) as being anticipated by USP 5,532,333 to Stouffer, et al. For the reasons which follow, Applicants submit that Stouffer, et al. do not anticipate claims 1-16.

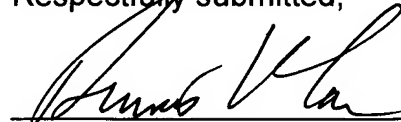
Claims 1-16 call for the features of (i) introducing crystallized pellets into a solid state polymerization reactor, (ii) removing heat from the hot pellets from the solid state polymerization reactor, (iii) transferring the heat removed to heat cooled pellets which constitute a feed through a crystallizer. Claims 1-16 are not anticipated by Stouffer, et al. because Stouffer et al. do not disclose any of these features. Stouffer et al. is directed to methods for crystallizing low molecular weight polyethylene terephthalate polymers either from the melt or from the glass. Stouffer et al. do not disclose feeding these crystallized polyester polymers to a solid state polymerization reactor, removing heat from the hot pellets from the solid state polymerization reactor, and thereafter transferring the removed heat to pellets which feed a crystallizer in order to heat the pellets feeding the crystallizer. Nowhere do Stouffer et al. suggest or disclose heating a feed of solid pellets to a crystallizer, or transferring the feed removed from hot pellets from a solid state polymerization reactor to the feed of a crystallizer.

Likewise, Stouffer et al. do not disclose the use of a heat exchanger for pellets exiting a solid state polymerization reactor as in claim 2, or a second heat exchanger as in claims 2 and 3, or direct contact heat exchanger as in claim 4, or plate heat exchanger in claim 5, or a plate and shell heat exchanger as in claim 6, or the use of a flow of gas in the heat exchanger as in claim 7, or a remote contact heat exchanger as in claim 8, or the transfer of heat from a cooling zone to a heating zone by means of a fluid in claims 9 and 10, or the mechanical separation of cooled pellets from heated gas as in claim 11, or the use of a heat exchanger with a continuous loop of piping through which gas is circulated as in claims 12 and 13, or the cooling of the hot pellets by stream of gas in the fluidized or agitated bed as in claims 14 and 15, or splitting the heat removed from the pellets exiting the solid state polymerization reactor to a feed into the solid state polymerization reactor and the feed into the crystallizer as in claim 16.

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For these reasons, Applicants submit that claims 1-16 are not anticipated or even suggested by Stouffer et al. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned with any inquiries concerning prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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5/19/2006
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